

Gifted Children Are...

From Gifted Children Are..., an NCAGT publication for North Carolina's parents of gifted children

Academically or intellectually gifted children are generally inquisitive, imaginative and analytical. They have good memories and often begin talking at an early age. They frequently enjoy complex puzzles and games that require concentration and reasoning and have a more extensive vocabulary than their peers. An early interest in reading, math or another special subject is not unusual. Gifted children often ask many "how and "why" questions.

It is important to realize that while some children demonstrate an overall intellectual ability, others show a specific aptitude. For example, one child may excel in all academic areas while another may excel in a specific area such as math or reading comprehension. Academically or intellectually gifted children are defined as students who perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual areas, specific academic fields, or in both intellectual areas and specific academic fields. Academically or intellectually gifted children are identified by using screening procedures developed by local school systems. According to the Guidelines Governing Local Plans for Gifted Education (NC Department of Public Instruction, January 1997), "Each system shall develop a screening procedure that provides for equal opportunity/access for all students, including minority students, students with disabilities and students who are economically disadvantaged...Each student should be viewed as an individual without limiting giftedness to any one score or measure." The process should include the following:

- Multiple criteria for decision making, including informal assessment
- Assessments that go beyond a narrow conception of giftedness
- Reliable instruments/strategies for assessing giftedness
- Appropriate instruments to be used with underserved populations
- Data which provide relevant information for instructional decision-making rather than labeling

Academically or intellectually gifted children are served in programs that may vary from grade to grade and school system to school system. The Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is the document which outlines the program service option(s) appropriate for a student at specific grade configurations (K-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12), and lists the learning environment, content modifications and special programs available to the student during those grade configurations. A DEP should be completed for each student during each of the four educational phases (Guidelines, p. 4). As the parent of an academically or intellectually gifted children you can learn more about the characteristics and needs of gifted children: By reading books like *My Child Is Gifted! Now What?* by Rick Olenchak; *Growing Up gifted* by Barbara Clark; *Teaching the Gifted Child* by James Gallagher and Shelagh Gallagher.

By joining the organizations in North Carolina that actively support gifted education: NCAGTPAGE (Parents for the Advancement of Gifted Education. (NC Association for the Gifted and Talented) and

By supporting NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children) <http://www.nagc.org> and SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted), Gifted Psychology Press, PO Box 5057, Scottsdale, AZ 85261.

By attending meetings and conferences sponsored by your local school systems, PAGENCAGTPAGE for educators and parents. chapters or the annual state conference on gifted education that is co-sponsored by and If you think your child is gifted, you should refer your child to a teacher, principal, gifted program or exceptional children program administrator in your school system. Your child will then be evaluated according to the identification criteria, and the results will be explained to you.